

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

Claim 1. A pontoon, comprising a substantially cylindrical member having a length in excess of about 14 feet and including first and second opposite ends, wherein the cylindrical member has no external circumferential welds intermediate the first and second ends and is substantially linear along its length axis.

Claim 2. The pontoon of Claim 1, wherein the cylindrical member has a length of at least about 20 feet.

Claim 3. The pontoon of Claim 1, further comprising a cap adjacent the first end of the cylindrical member and a bow section adjacent the second end of the cylindrical member.

Claim 4. The pontoon of Claim 1, wherein the cylindrical member is made from a single sheet of aluminum encircled about itself and secured together by a single longitudinal weld.

Claim 5. A pontoon boat, comprising a pontoon and a deck buoyantly supported by the pontoon, wherein the pontoon includes a substantially cylindrical member having a length in excess of about 14 feet and including first and second

opposite ends, wherein the cylindrical member has no external circumferential welds  
5 intermediate the first and second ends and is substantially linear along its length axis.

Claim 6. The pontoon boat of Claim 5, wherein the cylindrical member has  
a length of at least about 20 feet.

Claim 7. The pontoon boat of Claim 5, wherein the pontoon further includes  
a cap adjacent the first end of the cylindrical member and a bow section adjacent the  
second end of the cylindrical member.

Claim 8. The pontoon boat of Claim 5, wherein the cylindrical member is  
made from a single sheet of aluminum encircled about itself and secured together by  
a single longitudinal weld.

Claim 9. Apparatus for making a cylindrical member from a sheet material,  
the apparatus including a frame; first and second elongate rotatable rollers arranged and  
supported by the frame so that their length axis are substantially parallel in a vertical  
plane and spaced apart from one another in a horizontal plane, a third elongate rotatable  
5 roller being arranged and supported by the frame so that the length axis of the third  
roller in the horizontal plane is between the length axis of the first and second rollers  
and the length axis of the third roller in the vertical plane is above the length axis of the

first and second rollers; a drive system operatively associated with each of the rollers for driving the rollers in a synchronized rotating motion; and an anti-deflection system operatively associated with the third roller and including a rigid member and roller contacting members connected to the rigid member for contacting desired portions of the third roller to urge the third roller so that it remains substantially axially linear when force is applied to it during manufacture of the cylindrical member.

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Claim 10. The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the rollers each have a length of at least about 14 feet.

Claim 11. The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the rollers each have a length of at least about 25 feet.

Claim 12. The apparatus of Claim 9, further comprising an adjustment system operatively associated with the frame, the third roller, and the anti-deflection system for simultaneously adjusting the vertical position of the third roller and the anti-deflection system.

Claim 13. The apparatus of Claim 9, further comprising fasteners adjustably connected to the rigid member for adjusting the vertical position of the roller contact members relative to the third roller.

Claim 14. The apparatus of Claim 9, further comprising at least one roller support member positioned underneath and in contact with the first and second rollers to maintain each of the first and second rollers in a substantially axially linear orientation when force is applied to the first and second rollers during manufacture of the cylindrical member

Claim 15. A method for making a pontoon, the method including the steps of providing a sheet of aluminum having a length of at least 14 feet and encircling the sheet about its length axis using at least one roller having a length of at least 14 feet while simultaneously urging portions of the at least one roller in a desired direction so that the roller is substantially axially linear.

Claim 16. The method of Claim 15, wherein the at least one roller comprises three rollers each having a length of at least 14 feet and the step of simultaneously urging the at least one roller comprises simultaneously urging portions of each of the three rollers in desired directions so that each of the rollers is substantially axially linear.

Claim 17. The method of Claim 15, wherein the sheet of aluminum has a length of at least about 20 feet.